

# NATURE 2030

## Oxfordshire's Nature needs us

Our county's precious wildlife and natural beauty are under threat. Iconic species face local extinction and nearly all our rivers fail clean water standards. But your vote can turn the tide. The party elected to power will determine if we can revive Oxfordshire's unmatched natural glory - and build healthier, more resilient communities for all.

The upcoming [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) sets our direction, but we need you to hold politicians accountable for delivering it effectively.

The national Nature 2030 campaign has mapped out policies to protect 30% of UK lands and waters for nature's revival.

That vision requires tailored local action like this:

1. More Space for Nature by 2030 >  
**More space for Oxfordshire's nature**
2. A right to a healthy environment >  
**Healthy nature for everyone**
3. Delivering the green jobs we need >  
**Nurturing Oxfordshire's green workforce**
4. A pay rise for Farming >  
**Supporting nature friendly farming in Oxfordshire**
5. Making polluters pay >  
**Corporate responsibility for nature's recovery**

### How you can help

When casting your vote, choose a future where Oxfordshire's treasured landscapes and wildlife can thrive once more.

To ensure nature tops your party's agenda, look for:



Dedicated funding to protect and restore our natural environment



Plans to actively involve local people in conservation decisions and efforts



Commitment to collaborate closely with councils to implement nature-friendly policies

Strong political will, combined with your support, can drive meaningful change.  
Vote for clean air, clean water, accessible green spaces, and a sustainable future for all.  
**Oxfordshire's natural heritage is depending on you**

We've showcased just a few of the many inspiring examples from across our county of people, groups, and organisations helping nature. With the right funding, support, and commitment from government, even more could be done to restore our county's precious biodiversity.

## More space for Oxfordshire's nature

Oxfordshire is renowned for its beautiful countryside, rolling hills and river valleys, yet only **3.9% is protected for wildlife** in Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Wildlife Sites. This pales in comparison to the 30% target the UK has committed to under its pledge to reverse nature decline.

Our most threatened habitats like ancient meadows and heathlands have declined by up to 97%. Iconic species from turtle doves to nightingales are at risk of regional extinction. If Oxfordshire is to help the UK meet its nature commitments we need more, bigger, better, joined natural areas.



### From Abandoned Allotment to Wildlife Oasis

Boundary Brook Nature Reserve, once a disused allotment, now thrives as an urban oasis for wildlife thanks to the Oxford Urban Wildlife Group. With habitats ranging from woodland to pond, it showcases the power of community action in creating space for nature within the city.

Find out more: [www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk/communities-and-nature](http://www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk/communities-and-nature)



### Reviving Rivers, Restoring Ecosystems

The River of Life II project, led by Earth Trust, transformed floodplains along the Thames and Thame. By creating wetlands, backwaters, and woodland across 46,000m<sup>2</sup>, it boosted biodiversity, improved water quality, and provided vital habitats for species like the great crested newt, demonstrating effective landscape-scale conservation.

Find out more: [www.earthtrust.org.uk/river-of-life-ii](http://www.earthtrust.org.uk/river-of-life-ii)



### Uniting for Nature: The Power of Conservation Target Areas

Oxfordshire's 38 Conservation Target Areas, coordinated by Wild Oxfordshire, serve as rallying points for conservation efforts. Spanning a fifth of the county and encompassing nearly all of its Sites of Special Scientific Interest, these areas unite diverse partners to protect and restore our most precious habitats and species.

Find out more: [www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/oxfordshires-nature/conservation-target-areas](http://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/oxfordshires-nature/conservation-target-areas)

## Healthy Nature for Everyone

Environmental issues like air pollution disproportionately impact Oxfordshire's most economically disadvantaged communities, compounding health disparities. Nature plays a vital role in building resilience against climate change, improving health, and maintaining biodiversity.

But, large portions of the county **do not meet minimum standards** for accessible natural greenspace - 197 neighbourhoods in Oxfordshire lack greenspace access, with 17 neighbourhoods meet multiple criteria of concern.

### Reconnecting People and Land through Regenerative Farming

Roots and Rhythms, a six-month project at Thame's Lopemedede Farm, aims to restore biodiversity and strengthen human connections with the land. By exploring the intersection of farming, ecology, health, and education, this collaborative initiative seeks to create a regenerative vision for the farm and inspire others to embark on similar journeys.

Find out more: [www.rootsandrhythms.substack.com](http://www.rootsandrhythms.substack.com)

### Prescribing Nature for Wellbeing

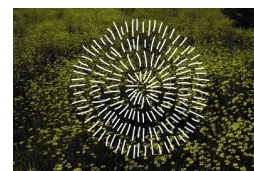
The Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership's Health and Nature Subgroup brings together diverse stakeholders to promote green social prescribing. By connecting healthcare providers with nature-based projects, the subgroup aims to increase participation in outdoor activities, especially among underserved populations, recognizing the vital role of nature in supporting health and wellbeing.

Find out more: [www.olnp.org.uk/nature-health](http://www.olnp.org.uk/nature-health)

### Mapping Healthy Walking Routes

The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare's Green Health Routes project creates neighbourhood maps highlighting accessible green spaces. Developed in consultation with communities and healthcare practitioners, these routes connect local hubs to parks, meadows, and woodlands. With accompanying nature engagement activities, the project encourages residents to explore and benefit from their natural surroundings.

Find out more: [www.nhsforest.org/projects/green-health-routes](http://www.nhsforest.org/projects/green-health-routes)



## Nurturing Oxfordshire's Green Workforce

With over 150 environmental community groups, nearly half our farmlands under environmental stewardship agreements, and an existing low-carbon sector employing over **8,000 people** Oxfordshire has a strong foundation and engagement around environmental issues.

The county's renewable energy, habitat conservation, and sustainable agriculture sectors could double in size by 2030, adding over 10,000 green jobs. Targeted training initiatives are essential to fulfil this potential at the necessary pace.



### Cultivating the Green Leaders of Tomorrow

Earth Trust's Inspiring Future Green Leaders project has successfully engaged 240 children from Reading schools with limited access to green spaces. Through real-world STEM learning and hands-on experiences, the project forges strong connections between young minds and nature, inspiring students to embark on their own school sustainability projects.

Find out more: [www.earthtrust.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/inspiring-future-green-leaders](http://www.earthtrust.org.uk/what_we_do/inspiring-future-green-leaders)



### Safeguarding Traditional Skills for Nature's Recovery

The National Trust's Heritage and Rural Skills Centre at Coleshill champions traditional building techniques and rural crafts. Through beginners' courses, spaces for local groups, and rental units for professional craftspeople, the centre safeguards valuable conservation skills, helping protect heritage structures and promote individual wellbeing in a supportive, green setting.

Find out more: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/oxfordshire-buckinghamshire-berkshire/heritage-and-rural-skills-](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/oxfordshire-buckinghamshire-berkshire/heritage-and-rural-skills-)



### Preparing the Workforce for a Green Transition

Abingdon and Witney College's Common Leys Farm Campus offers a unique learning environment for students interested in countryside skills, farming, and horticulture. With purpose-built teaching areas, including a livestock technology centre, greenhouses, and rural skills workshops, the campus provides hands-on experience and foundational skills for future land-based careers.

Find out more: [www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk/campuses/common-leys-farm](http://www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk/campuses/common-leys-farm)

## Supporting nature friendly farming

Over 74% of Oxfordshire is farmed. Our farmers care deeply about the landscapes they work and the biodiversity of their land. Many have been working for decades to balance productive agriculture with healthy wildlife, but they can't shift to more sustainable practices without public support, realistic incentives and sustainable markets for nature-friendly farm products.

### Farming and Empowering Others

FarmED, based at Honeydale Farm in the Cotswolds, is a demonstration farm showcasing how to successfully run a farm while working with nature. By hosting workshops, talks, and feasts, FarmED inspires farmers, children, and interested individuals to adopt sustainable practices. They also create opportunities for others to start nature-friendly businesses on their land.

Find out more: [www.farm-ed.co.uk](http://www.farm-ed.co.uk)



### Embracing Sustainable Practices for Biodiversity

Buern Farms, owned by Henry Astor, showcases nature-friendly practices like growing heritage wheat varieties, using living mulch, and experimenting with agroforestry. By participating in the Evenlode Catchment Partnership's Natural Flood Management project and providing land for community food initiatives, Astor exemplifies how farms can restore soils, store carbon, and produce nutrient-dense food while supporting biodiversity.

Find out more: [www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/evenlode/evenlode-catchment-partnership](http://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/evenlode/evenlode-catchment-partnership)



### Uniting Farmers for a Thriving Thame Catchment

The Thame Catchment Farm Cluster brings together 48 farms, covering 6,500 hectares, to create a sustainable food and farming economy. By sharing knowledge and resources, farmers are restoring habitats, improving water quality, and supporting biodiversity. Their collaborative efforts showcase the power of working together to achieve landscape-scale environmental gains.

Find out more: [www.riverthame.org/thame-catchment-farm-cluster](http://www.riverthame.org/thame-catchment-farm-cluster)



## Corporate responsibility for nature's recovery

Though rich in precious ecosystems like floodplain meadows, Oxfordshire struggles with ecological threats. Nearly all local rivers fail clean water standards, with almost **100 pollution** incidents documented in Oxford city since 2018, frequently from sewage leaks.

Rare chalk streams face disappearance through appropriation and contamination. Air pollution drives over **300 early** deaths county-wide each year. All businesses - from water companies to finance, developers to retail - have an opportunity to contribute nature's recovery.



### Sustainable Business Practices

Anne Veck Limited, an award-winning Oxford hair salon, champions sustainability and biodiversity. As a net CO2 neutral business, they reduce energy use, waste, and plastic while working with eco-conscious suppliers. By tackling sustainability holistically and engaging clients, they demonstrate how small businesses can make a positive impact on the planet.



### Transforming Landscapes through Quarry Restoration

Smiths Bletchington's flagship Gill Mill quarry is transforming intensive arable fields and improved grasslands into one of the region's largest connected priority wildlife habitats. Through innovative restoration schemes, the company is creating vast reedbeds, public paths, and bridleways, showcasing how the mineral extraction industry can deliver substantial biodiversity gains.



### Creating a Nature-Positive Business Park

Jennings aims to make their Monument Park site in Chalgrove net zero for carbon emissions by 2030. They've incorporated trees, hedgerows, and greenery throughout the park, and with advice from Wild Oxfordshire, they've created wildflower beds, a herb garden, and installed beehives. This eco-friendly approach benefits both tenants and local biodiversity.

Find out more: [www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/businesses](http://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/businesses)

Find out more at  
[www.oxeb.org.uk/nature-2030.html](http://www.oxeb.org.uk/nature-2030.html)

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